ISSUE 26

WRESTLING THEN & NOW

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LOUIS THESZ

THE EDITOR'S SPACE: BY EVAN GINZBURG

It's that "magic" time of year again! Steroidmania's about to run wild once more, so I'm here to take you away form all those tired predictions (first, however, here's mine: like all the other Wrestlemania's it'll stink to high heaven!), and give you another WT&N blast from the past!

First off, let's get down to business! WT&N's first annual comes out this month. It's 50 pages, a measly $7, and chronicles THE GREAT TERRITORIES. It's packed with clippings, art, articles, interviews, line-up sheets and title histories and will be a real collector's item! Don't miss it! Make all checks payable to Evan Ginzburg. PLEASE SUPPORT THIS PROJECT. If this works out financially I plan on doing this yearly...

Also wanted to briefly comment on the Lano situation. For those of you who don't know, WT&N's Mike Lano's taken some heat in the Torch. I won't get into the entire surreal mess, and really don't know or care who said or did what to set off all the controversy. I simply want to say that Lano has been a true friend to me. He's a PAID SUBSCRIBER who has contributed articles in virtually every issue, and has forwarded countless rare items at his own expense. Back when I had a few dozen readers, he was there for me, and even today I'm no competition to the Meltzers and Kellers and he's always gone out of his way to help (if I had a fraction of that support from these major editors I'd be forever indebted). Get ready for the cliche of the week, but actions do speak louder than words, and his actions make him a helluva good guy in my book. And if that isn't a popular opinion in the "inner circle" of sheet readers (few of whom support this sheet as Lano has), then so be it...

Speaking of good guys, thanks to Jeff Mullins of Sushi($1.50 to PO Box 36189 San Jose, Ca. 95158) and Steve Beverly for their very kind words about WT&N. If you haven't read Sushi, it's an ORIGINAL.

RE: the steroid scandals. As the expression goes, "Every dog has his day," and hopefully McMahon will be FORCED to go back to WRESTLING as opposed to the steroid monster/kiddie show it's deteriorated into...

While I have your attention, can anyone out there loan me an ONITA tape? Sounds like that boy's up to some real craziness.

ALL YEARBOOK, BACK ISSUE, RENEWAL AND NEW SUBSCRIPTION CHECKS SHOULD BE MADE OUT TO EVAN GINZBURG! THANK YOU!

BRODY SAYS SIZE, ABILITY AND DESIRE WILL MAKE HIM NEW CHAMPION

WILD BULL CURRY

Bruiser Brody is not one to look past an opponent, and that's the case when he goes against Bulldog Bob Brown for the Central States Title.

Brody compared Bulldog to a sleeping snake. "Wake him and he bites you," Brody said of the Champion.

While Brody called Brown one of the most aggressive wrestlers he has ever faced, he feels he will be able to overcome Brown's ability and win the title.

"I have a size and strength advantage. Couple that with my desire to win and that's what tips the scale in my direction. I am just a little bit too good in every department, just a little more than Brown will be able to handle," Bruiser Brody said.

The Fans

by Vic Stanley

Attending a wrestling house show is like viewing a sociological cross section of America. The following descriptions are not in any way meant to be insulting since I have fit into most of these categories myself (Female Types excepted!) during various stages of my life.

Type A - Blonde females between the ages of 14 and 19 (trying to look older) with any number of variations on the classic Farrah Fawcett hairstyle moussed into a dangerously solid block of protein. They always cheer for Flyin' Brian and the Texas Tornado. They are NOT arena rats, but are good girls who also idolize Bon Jovi and New Kids, and stay away from Art Barr and Chris Champion in stairwells. After the matches, they first go to their girlfriends' houses to take off all the makeup that they put on after their mothers forbade them from wearing it. They hate Missy Hyatt while trying to emulate her look.

Type B - Arena Rats. I personally don't like the term. The wrestling equivalent of the rock groupie, although not as infamous among the general public. Especially attracted to guys like Michael Hayes who hang out in bars a lot. What's wrong with these women seeking sexual liasons with their favorite wrestlers? Would I pass up a similiar opportunity with Magnificent Mimi, Hollywood or Lady Godiva? I think not! Fair is fair!

Type C - Older women. They were weaned on wrestling and usually prefer cute faces. Although they boo and hiss the rulebreakers, they also recognize talent. They enjoy the wrestlers in the same way that many women enjoy male strippers - innocent yet titilating. They are my favorite fans and in many ways, the smartest.

Type D - Young, skinny adolescent males with glasses and melting Hulk Hogan ice cream bars who always boo the Million Dollar Man or any other heel, regardless of skill. The typical Type D fan scrambles into the ring at the behest of the Juicer or The Birdman to strike scrawny body builder poses or do silly dances to the dismay of his parents. They eventually grow up to either become Type G fans, or forget about wrestling completely.

Type E - Young girls who are fascinated, yet terrified by the size and volume of the rulebreakers. They are partial to running into the aisle to pat the Von Erichs on the back, then scrambling back to their seats with big smiles on their faces while their Type C aunts and mothers look on approvingly.

Type F - The parents of Type D and E fans who try to explain why Tugboat lost and convince them that he isn't really hurt. They put on the pretense that they are there only for the sake of their kids, but they actually enjoy it just as much. When they tell their kids about Bruno Sammartino, the kids say "Who?"

Type G - Teenage boys who raise hell at the matches, then go back to school to perform standing suplexes in gym class. For a short period of time, they all aspire to become wrestlers themselves, especially when they discover Type A & B fans.

Type H - Older male fans, usually grandfathers or uncles who bring the kids to experience the same excitement that they remember from their youth. Maybe not smart, but well versed. They are the family members who bring the kids when their parents won't. Where would we have all been without them?

Type I - "Smart" fans who dress like the 4 Horsemen, respect the singing of the Soviet National Anthem and cheer for the Great Muta. They are also the ones who display their newsletters and Sting T-shirts at WWF TV tapings until Rene Goulet and his gang of thugs throws them out. Sometimes they are just a bit too smug, but are among the most loyal of all fans.

Type J - "Marks" in the front row who stand up and confront the rulebreakers and managers nose to nose. They really believe that wrestling is real and constantly point out cheating to the referee. Regardless of the fact that they are perceived as the dumbest fans of all, they also seem to have the most fun.

Type K - The Big John and Luscious Lynnda type who suspend their reality and become a welcome part of the show. Sometimes mistaken as Type J fans. They are outspoken and enthusiastic, but not mean spirited. They heckle people who disagree with them, but don't ruin the illusion for the kids.

Type L - Fans like me who spend most of their time watching Types A through K.

Have I left anybody out?

ARIZONA 1981 BY: A. NONYMOUS

BARRY BERNSTEN: Martial arts school instructor who ran the promotion, who was generally a strutting, arrogant blowhard. He lasted some three years, but then got more interested in promoting his school than the matches. When the bulk of his wrestlers walked out on him, he donned a mask himself as El Lobo, introduced his son to wrestling as Mr Murder and his girlfriend under some forgotten name, then hastily trained martial arts students to wrestle. An unforgettable want ad he ran in the Phoenix Gazette announced "Wanted, Men, Women, Midgets to be professional wrestlers. No experience necessary. We will train. His promotion went straight downhill after that. The man was a fool, as had he listened to his booking office, he might well still be the controlling force in Arizona wrestling today, withstanding WWF invasion just like Lawler and Jarrett down south.

BETTY CLARKE: Another obscure woman wrestler who liked to brag about how she was the defending NWA United States Champion, who she knew, and where she had wrestled, although no one ever heard of her. One wonders why, if she had such fame elsewhere, she was stuck in Arizona. Eventually tried her hand at promoting, shafted a bunch of wrestlers on their pay, went back to wrestling, got shafted in return while working on a show for the men she previously screwed over, and faded from view. Whenever her name crops up anymore, it is basically accompanied with loud, sarcastic laughter. To fans she was pretty stuffy, without the qualifications to back it up.

JODY ARNOLD: The "nephew" of Don Arnold, though no relation would probably be the best wrestler this state ever saw, but he never made the bit time due to refusal to leave Arizona, his furious devotion to his large (10 children eventually) family, and a thriving solar heating business. He beat all the top names to come into Arizona from 1969 to 1984, including Cowboy Bob Ellis, Kurt Von Steiger, Woody Farmer, and even Billy Graham. He was also the first man to make Afa of the Samoans bleed (Afa and Sika both started out in Arizona in the early 1970's, although both deny it now. Both lost to Arnold). When playing a heel, he would avoid everyone, when being a baby, he would mingle and be pleasant. Actually quite fearful of fans, in spite of his size and strength, due to death threats over the years.

BILLY ANDERSON: Started out in Arizona, did quite well, went to California and regressed to jobs for the WWF which belittle his true talent and potential. The WWF of today would like to brush under the carpet the win he was once given over Paul Orndorff via pin. Always was polite and friendly to fans. Such was generally the case with faces back then. If he was on their good side he could count on them buying tickets to support him, something many of the big time jerks today either don't realize or don't care about.

SUPERSTAR BILLY GRAHAM: As mentioned in issue #9 of WT&N, Graham did some shots for the independents, including a humiliating loss in 2 straight falls to local topdog and Jerry Lawler lookalike, Jody Arnold. A very nice person who would readily sign autographs for the fans, who were awestruck to see a big star in the area.

GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS TO WT&N ARE ONLY $15/YEAR! BEST VETERAN STAFF TODAY!!!

i really didn't mean anything by the "i wonder how many ear-drums she's popped with those thighs while in the throes of passion" remark!
J.

mister J meets Terri Power

WRESTLING TIME MACHINE

Evan Ginzburg's

Wrestling

A cowboy and a marine corp drill sergeant drew 22,000 howling fans into Madison Square Garden this past Washington's Birthday. How did such a strange occurrence transpire? It was wrestling night, naturally.

Stan Hansen is a 275 pound Texan who calls himself the "baddest redneck stud" in the country. He is a highly rated wrestler who has main-evented throughout the world and his opponent on this evening was the young champion, Bob Backlund. Their bout was a fast and furious one in which both men wrestled, brawled and bled profusely. A draw was declared at the 18:26 mark and a rematch signed, but a title change should not be expected. Backlund is going strong after 3 years and should hold on to his belt at least another few months; or until his box-office appeal begins to wane.

The co-feature was between Sergeant (Bob) Slaughter and Pedro Moralese. Moralese, the former World Champ, is now the holder of the Inter-Continental belt, a title which simply was created to attract a few more fans. Nonetheless, the bout was an exciting one as the colorful Sergeant stomped, kicked, and cheated his way to a disqualification after 22:46. For a 300 pounder, Slaughter is very quick, certainly colorful with his ridiculous mannerisms and exaggerated uniform, and is a tough customer as well.

Whereas these two bouts were excellent, the preliminaries were simply pathetic. They are rapidly becoming predictable and just serve as time killers—this trend should stop quickly before the customers become disgruntled. After all, how many consecutive matches can a guy like Dom Denucchi lose and still maintain credibility (Hell, he even lost at the last card held at Queens College)! And why must top competitors come on at the end of the evening and rush through their bouts to beat the absurd 11 o'clock curfew (Why is there a curfew anyway? Are they that much in a rush to count their profits). Wrestling is a big business but the fans will only be ripped off so many times.

In short, wrestling is fun, funny, and sometimes even exciting. Yet it is an international business as well, and promoters must remember it is the fans who are keeping these crazy exhibitions going.

IN THE DEVIL'S DEN

BY THE JERSEY DEVIL

NEVER LOOK BACK, SOMETHING MIGHT BE GAINING ON YOU!!!!

YES, GEEKS AND GEEK-ESSES, THE GREAT JERSEY DEVIL HAS RETURNED! NO LONGER WILL YOU DROOLING TOOTHLESS CRETINS HAVE TO PLOD THROUGH ANOTHER EXCRUCIATING ISSUE OF WT&N WITHOUT YOUR HERO. BESIDES, I COULDN'T STAND LISTENING TO THAT PATHETIC WRETCH OF AN EDITOR, EVAN MR. PERSONALITY GINZBERG CRYING ABOUT HOW HIS SUBSCRIPTIONS HAVE GONE DOWN SINCE MY HIATUS. ALSO, I'D HATE TO DISAPPOINT MY GREATEST FAN RODNEY L. FROM MOUTHWASH, CANADA. SO, EVEN THOUGH MY FANTASTIC BUSINESS EMPIRE NEEDS MY IMMEDIATE ATTENTION, I WILL GRACE YOU WITH A FEW WORDS OF BRILLIANCE.

GREAT TO SEE THAT JOEL GOODHART'S PLAN OF ATTACK FOR THE NEXT FEW YEARS IS SO WELL PLANNED. DREAMS OF AN IDEAL REGIONAL PROMOTION SEEM TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE. NOW IF WE CAN ONLY GET JOEL TO VENTURE TO NORTH JERSEY (HOME OF THE GREAT JERSEY DEVIL) TO KICK THE BUTTS OF THE OTHER SO-CALLED PROMOTERS WHO POLLUTE MY BEAUTIFUL MEADOWLANDS. JOEL, YOU'RE A TRUE HEEL!

MY OLD PAL AND NEMESIS, CACTUS JACK IS ONE OF THE BRIGHTEST SPOTS IN A FAIRLY DISMAL WINTER OF WRESTLING. IT'S ONLY BEEN ABOUT A YEAR SINCE OLD CACTUS DISSED ME ON AREZZI'S PRO WRESTLING SPOTLIGHT BUT I'LL PROBABLY FORGIVE HIM NOW THAT HE'S SHOWN JUST HOW NASTY HE REALLY IS BY TEAMING WITH ABDULLAH AND PUTTING ON AN INCREDIBLE SERIES WITH EDDIE GILBERT IN 1991. IT'S HARD TO BE ANGRY WITH A GUY WHO'S THAT DESPICABLE. YEAH!!!

FINALLY, YOU NOSTALGIA GEEKS HAD BEST HEED THE ADVICE IN THE BEGINNING OF THIS COLUMN! THEN AGAIN, WHY WOULD YOU BOZOS EVER TRY TO COMPREHEND THE WORDS OF SOMEONE AS INSIGHTFUL AS THE GREAT JERSEY DEVIL?

OFTEN IMITATED, NEVER DUPLICATED

THIS IS THE JERSEY DEVIL

FROM DEEP...IN THE SWAMPS....OF JERSEY

BIZARRE WRESTLING ANGLES

&

INCIDENTS!!!

The BEAR Is Coming

Terrible Ted the 600 lb. Canadian Black Bear has wrestled more than one thousand men in the last five years. Many of these wrestlers have been forced to retire after their encounter with the Bear. There are not many wrestlers around who are willing to tangle with big Ted, but we have a couple of men around here who claim they will take on anything that walks. So Spectator Sports has signed them to a contract to take on the Bear. Who are they?

(WOW) Listen to this. (WOW)

George (The Animal) Steele

and

(The (Hungarian) Beast)

PICK THE WINNERS

YOU PAY NOTHING

WIN: VALUABLE COUPONS $ $ FOR WEDNESDAY WRESTLING

PICK ALL THE EVENTS CORRECTLY AND WIN

$125.00 CASH PRIZE

RULES: At intermission, if you are correct on all four events go back to "Contest Center" and get your coupons for Wed. you may continue to play by telling contest girls who will win the 5th event, if you are correct after the 5th event return to the "Contest Center". Now tell the girl who will win the 6th event. If you are correct you'll win the Grand Prize of $125.00.

(In case of a tie on cash prize, winners will split total sum evenly.)

You may stop at anytime. Again, guess wrong and you are out of the contest.

WRIST WRESTLING KING - BILLY GRAHAM RETURNS FRI. APRIL 7th

Pick the Winners of the First Four Events by 8 P.M.

If your guesses are correct return to the contest center at intermission All four guesses must be correct to win coupons.

Tear out entire coupon. Write your name.

Mark an "X" through the Wrestlers Name You think will win, mark an "X" through BOTH Names if you think the bout will be a draw

YOUR NAME _____

Our "Picks"	Olympic Odds	Event Coupon
DIXON'S Got Soul	Even $	OPENING EVENT ART DOMINGUEZ (Mexico) VS. DORY DIXON (West Indies)
PANTERA too Fast	Even $	2ND EVENT LA PANTERA NEGRA (Mexico) VS. MR. SAITO (JAPAN)
KHAN on a Hot Winning Streak	Even $	3RD EVENT KUBLA KHAN (Manchuria) VS. SALVADOR LOTHARIO (Mexico)
TAG Champs Have Edge	2 TO 1	TAG 4TH EVENT TAG Don Carson and Kinji Shibuya VS. Black Gordman and New Goliath 2 of 3 Falls — 1 Hour
INTERMISSION		
TOLOS to Drag Killer	2 TO 1	ROMAN GLADIATOR EVENT AMERICA'S CHAMPIONSHIP JOHN TOLOS (Champion, Canada) VS. KILLER KOWALSKI (Challenger, Canada) 1 Hour
INTERMISSION		
MATA Looks Good	Even $	6TH EVENT BROTHER JOSEPH (BIG SUR, CALIF.) VS. RAUL MATA (Mexico)

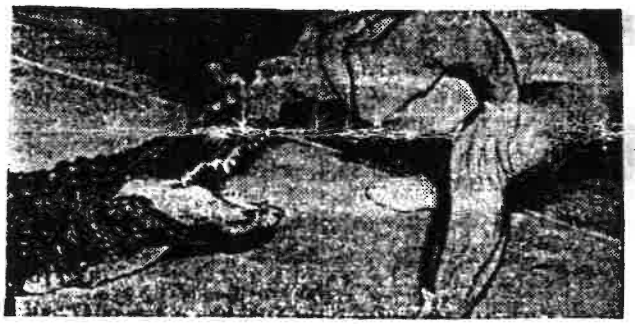
Lights Out Event — SHIBUYA vs. SAITO

WRESTLING EVERETT TRIANON

TONIGHT. FEBRUARY 3 — 8:30 P. M.

FRANKIE HART vs. BOB CUMMINGS

DUTCH WEAVER vs. WALT OLSON



SPECIAL EVENT

Tuffy Trusdale vs. 500-lb. Alligator

OPENER — TONY ROSS vs. TEX HAGER

Betty, Bear Wins Boise Mat Event

By JIM ALLEN
Free Press Sportswriter

Betty, the wrestling bear, drew a crowd of about 500 fans in Boise last night, and won her match over Leon Kirlinko, who left the ring after Betty roughed him up for about 10 minutes.

However, in the main attraction and the semi-final, the crowd saw plenty of action with a wrestler thrown out of the ring and then slugged and in defense almost bit off the finger of a man who was trying to get out of the way.

The Australian tag-team match was a roughie all the way, and Tiny Jacobs, a 300-pound refree had his hands full.

The match pitted Kirlinko and Dutch Schultz against the team of Cal Roberts and Bill Fletcher.

FAST, FURIOUS BATTLE

Kirlinko was able to get Roberts in his corner and he and Dutch by alternating roughed up the Canadian in great style with Kirlinko finishing him off with a body slam and press to win the first fall in 11:17.

Roberts came back strong for the second fall and with the help of his partner, Fletcher, he finished off the "Mad Russian" with three successive drop-kicks and a wrist flying mare to win the second fall in 11:09.

The battle for the third fall was fast and furious, Roberts was in a bad way with Kirlinko, but managed to tag in Fletcher. As Bill was about to dump Leon, his partner tagged him and he went after Fletcher with clenched fist smashes to the chin. Fletcher weathered the attack, secured a reverse jackknife hold and flopped the Dutchman in 6:28 to win the fall and match.

SURPRISED OPPONENT

The semi-final brought together Moe Smith of Boise, and Johnny Buff, formerly of Seattle, but now of Meridian.

Johnny is just out of a 4-year hitch in the Navy, where he kept up with his wrestling. He surprised Smith so much that Moe began roughing him up to keep from getting dumped.

Both wrestlers threw the book at each other for the deciding fall. Smith roughed up Buff considerably. Johnny got mad and threw Smith out of the ring. As Smith dropped into the laps of some ringsiders, three men jumped him, one clipped him on the jaw; another smacked him in the stomach, but the third one didn't do so well.

Smith beat him to the punch and knocked him cold. Then he was smothered. In defense he bit the finger of a Nampa fan and broke his glasses.

Another Nampan put a headlock on Smith and three or four other spectators broke it up. There were no police on duty at the ring.

Smith was able to get back in the ring and Buff clamped a headlock on him, which Smith broke. Then Buff grabbed him for a bodyslam and press, but the bell ended the scheduled 30-minute match and saved Moe from defeat. The referee called it a draw.

Cal Roberts won on disqualification over Dutch Schultz in the opening match after 5½ minutes of mayhem.

It was announced that the regular wrestling season would start on Sept. 3, with all new faces.

Mat Fan Stabs Pro Wrestler During Match

FLORENCE, Ala. AP—A spectator plunged into a tag match melee and stabbed one of the four wrestlers here Friday night.

Pedro Zapata, 25, was listed in critical condition at a hospital with at least nine stab wounds in the back, shoulder and left forearm. His right thumb was severely slashed.

The knife attack came while 750 spectators howled in frenzy at the battling of Zapata and Mario Galento with Guy Mitchell and Happy Humphrey.

Matchmaker Bill Jobe said that just before the incident referee George Stutts, Killen, Ala., had been caught in the scuffling and suffered a gash above an eye that required his removal from the ring.

MEANIE MOBBED

Fans Turn On Wallick In Mat Riot

Leo Wallick didn't know it when he entered the ring Monday night at the Labor temple, but before he left it he was wrestling everybody in the joint except his listed rival, Lee Grable.

Prior to wrestling fans getting onto him, the Chicago meanie had dropped a fall to Grable. But when he slammed Grable into the ring curtain and knocked him unconscious, it brought down on him the concerted efforts of fans who started to mob him.

Referee Jack Mitchell refused to hand down a decision and ordered Wallick's end of the purse held up. Prior to the uproarious ending, Grable had won a fall in seven minutes with a series of body slams and flying tackles.

Andy Truman kept his unbeaten string in operation as he won two of three falls from the Purple Mask. Tony Ross tossed Glen Detton and Dale Kisen won via the disqualification route from Jack Lipscomb. MAR. 22, 30

BILLIE JESSIE'S

INTERVIEW WITH THE ITALIAN STALLION

Q. Lets' begin by telling the fans exactly where you were born.
A. I was born in Naples, Italy.
Q. At what age did you come to the United States?
A. My parents brought me here when I was only 8 yrs. old.
Q. Where were you raised?
A. My family settled in Detroit, Michigan.
Q. Could you tell us something about your athletic background?
A. Well, I played college and professional football and was a two-time AAU National Wrestling Champion, as an Olympian. In my professional football days, I played with the Dallas Cowboys as a linebacker.
Q. You are one of the great wrestlers of the NWA. Could you tell us who trained you and who you credit as being a strong influence in your early career?
A. Yes, I was trained by Ole and Gene Anderson and also Dusty Rhodes had a great deal to do with my training. All three of these great wrestlers should get the credit, I think.
Q. Just how long have you been wrestling?
A. It's been 8 yrs. now, since I began wrestling.
Q. Stallion, how do you feel about the independent promotions as opposed to the major leagues?
A. The independent promtions have some of the best talent around. This not to say that the WWF and NWA (where I continue to compete) doesn't have good talent. But it's all in the ridiculous gimmicks that the promoter puts on them and how they are handled as far as promoting them.
Q. I understand that you are now running your own promotions in addition to working with the NWA. I'm sure our readers would be very interested in knowing more about your promotions.
A. I would be glad to tell you more about it because I'm very proud of it, our wrestlers and the way it is growing. The name of it is (PWF) Professional Wrestling Federation and it is based out of Charlotte, North Carolina. We have some great talent and we're very excited about it and expect some great things for it in the future.
Q. What are some of the major areas that the PWF run?
A. At this time, we run mainly in West Virginia, Virginia, and North Carolina, but expect to expand very soon, as the promotion grows. One other area that we have only recently began is Tennessee. Some of our greatest fans are in that area so we are looking forward to it.
Q. Being a role-model to so many of your fans, how does that make you feel and how do you feel toward your fans?
A. Well, the fans are a very important part of my career. It makes me feel really good that I can be someone that the fans look up to, and maybe in some way, I can give them some incentive in their lives and if I can do that, my purpose has been accomplished.
Q. Stallion, what titles have you held in your career?
A. Over the past 8 yrs. I have held the World TV title, the Central States Tag Team titles, the Fl title, the PWF tag team titles, and I am now the holder of the PWF Heavyweight title.

Q. Would you tell us how you feel about steriods and other use of drugs in the wrestling sport?
A. I am totally against any use of drugs, of any kind, in or out of the sport. I feel that plenty of hard work, working out, and a drug-free life is the key to the 'natural-raw strength and muscle.'
Q. I also hear that you have been talking with our young people about drugs. Your speeches must be euphonious to capture the attention of our youth. This communication is much-needed between role-models such as yourself and our young people. That is very important, Stallion, and I think you should be commended for your efforts.
A. Well, thank you. When the PWF goes to schools for matches, I always try to make time to speak to the students about the harm that drugs can do and the importance of remaining 'drug-free.' If I can reach just one student, it is worth it all. Drugs are a real problem in our society and believe me, that's an understatement.
Q. Even in the midst of all the turmoil in the Middle East, I saw that the PWF put on a benefit match for the local families with milatary personnel participating in Desert Storm. Would you tell us more about that?
A. Yes, the PWF along with J104 radio station in Bluefield, WV, had a benefit show at the Brushfork Armory, in support of our troops. We felt that was the very least we could do for our men who was there risking their lives for our freedom and to show them of our 100 % support. Some of the guys on that card were Mike 'The Biscuit Ferry' McGarrett, the radio announcer at J104, The Hexal, The Hillbilly, Nightmare 2, Russian Assassin, The Grappler, Buddy Blond, the 'Hands of Stone' Ronnie Garvin and myself with my manager Claudio Montrosse.
Q. Are you involved in any other work?
A. Well, I don't call it work, but on occasion, I visit ailing children who are in the hospitals, hoping to give them some encouragement and brighten their day. I have also done some acting and stunt work but my most important role is being a husband and father.
Q. I guess that answers what was going to be my next question.
A. Yes, I am married to a beautiful Princeton, WV native.
Q. Do you have any children?
A. Yes, we have one daughter, Lisa. All that I do is for one reason, and that is to give Lisa some direction in life.
Q. Tell us what some of your interests are, outside the ring.
A. Well, like I said, I am a family man. When I have time off, I like to spend it with my wife and daughter. We like to watch a good movie, go to the circus, ets.
Q. What message would you like to send to our young people?
A. I would have to say to remember that we can turn off our animosities toward each other and get along and to always express your love to your mommies and daddies.
Q. Stallion, you have such a sparkling personality and I'm sure that it has a positive effect on those that see you especially the students. How does that make you feel?
A. Our youth is our future and I hope that I have helped someone, along the way.
Q. In closing, what kind of advice would you give to the aspiring young wrestlers that are just beginning in the sport?
A. First of all, I would tell them to never give up and keep plugging away, workout as often as possible, eat the right foods but most of all, keep their bodies and minds clean and free from drugs.
Q. How about telling the fans how they can join your fan club.
A. By all means, just send $10.00 for membership fees, to The Italian Stallion Fan Club, Billie Jessee, 1000 Stonegate Rd N9, Kingsport, Tn. 37660
Q. Thank you so much for taking time from your busy schedule to talk with us. We wish you all the best in the future. Let me remind the fans that anytime they see your name on a card, come out to see the Italian Stallion for an action-packed night of wrestling entertainment.
A. You're very welcome..any time. Its' been my pleasure.

IRON MIKE EINHORN- ALUMINUM SIDING SALESMAN
(The Man Who Knows Wrestling Like The Palm Of His Hand)

The Nightmare Continues...

I like my coffee like I like my women: milk & 2 sugars...

The crowd at the last WWF match I went to reminded me of the waiting room at the muffler shop. Sort of like where human evolution took a nasty detour...

Did you know that I was the baby on the Ivory Snow box in the middle 50's?

I had one of those "blind dates" again. The last time I saw a face like that it was chasing Karen Black around the kitchen with a butcher knife...

In my neighborhood there's one bowling lane and a couple of pins are missing. A perfect score is 204.

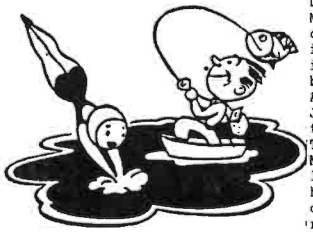
I went shopping the other day and the salesman insisted on measuring my inseam. I bought the toaster anyway...

Someone told me they saw Evan Ginzburg on Valentine's Day entering "Snow World's" strip club with a dozen roses...

There's a new movie out about a boss that goes to bed with his secretary called:"FILE THIS"...

My friend took his wife to the matches in L.A. for their 10th Anniversary. Boy, she knows she's really special...

In closing, remember..."A fellow's got little control as to whether a choice he makes turns out to be the right one. All he can do is make sure he's done it for the right reason."



IN THE ANNUAL:
Dutch was there! Dutch Mantell rips the lid off the Brody murder in an exclusive interview! Never before released info!! Articles on: Promoter Jack Pfeffer(exposing the business in 1938!), Toots Mondt, Sam Menacker, "Jobbers" we loved, Championship histories, countless clippings and regional profiles!!!
DON'T YOU DARE MISS IT!

GARY FISHMAN'S COLUMN

For the first time that I can remember I have to admit tht I am more interested in the WWF than in WCW (though I have little interest in either). The loss of Flair to the WWF regardless of how much he has slipped has meant to me that a WCW card is no longer an EVENT. With no one on the horizon to take his place as the real total package WCW ceases to have meaning at least to me. The NWA used to represent heat, tension and drama but all that has been replaced by the characters themeselves rather than the unfolding drama of a feud. I remember going to NWA cards where the heat was so intense that riots broke out (I will write more about that in the upcoming annual). While I of course am not promoting crowd disturbances I do miss what the NWA once meant. I never went to wrestling because I wanted to see someone dance, scream or flex but because I could identify with what was being played out. Back in Georgia in the 70's there were nights when the crowd would stand through entire cards. Now they can't wait to run out to beat the traffic. Unless Bill Watts decides to start up his own group (WCW I believe is beyond repair because of crazy politics), wrestling as I like it is possibly gone forever.

By: Don Gene Smith

Part Two - 1979

As 1979 dawned, David and Kevin were already recognized as their father's WCCW tag team champions, but things continued to proceed more slowly in St. Louis:

February 2 - Kevin beat Pierre Bonnett (second match on card)

April 6 - David beat "Bulldog" Bob Brown (third match on card)

April 27 - Fritz and David beat Siegfried Stanke and Jerry Brown ("special attraction")

Then on May 18, St. Louis wrestling history was made as all three Von Erichs appeared together in a tag team match against Bobby Duncum, Siegfried Stanke, and Lord Alfred Hayes. This time, unlike in years past, Fritz entered the ring to thunderous applause! Only one other time had Kiel Auditorium hosted such a "first family," and that was several years earlier when Dory Funk Sr. teamed with his sons, Dory and Terry. The match itself was a delight for Von Erich fans. The revered trio completely dominated the match, displaying every hold in their vast repetoire. Finally the claw hold brought down the curtain for Duncum, Stanke, and Hayes.

The NWA champion at that point was Harley Race, and the time was right for David to take his place as a top star. Unlike many wrestlers today, he had indeed earned the status. While Kevin was the most charismatic with the girls, most fans realized that David was the more promising of the two brothers from an overall talent standpoint.

First, David held Race to a 30 minute draw in Fort Worth,Texas in a match that naturally saw David dominate. Then on a match aired May 27 on "Wrestling at the Chase" Harley faced both David and Fritz in a handicap tag match. Fritz never entered the ring, however, as David slashed Race's face with the iron claw until the referee declared the champion unable to continue. That set the stage for a June 15 world title confrontation between Harley Race and David Von Erich at Kiel Auditorium.

Of course, Race prevailed, but David Von Erich at that point was a complete wrestling star, and rightfully so. For one thing, he had filled out physically (steroids?) and no longer looked like the gangly basketball player. Second, to work the crowd, he had mastered the necessary mannerisms and moves, many of which he had obviously learned from Fritz. Third, the card which he headlined against Race was an 11,000 fan sellout. David had proven he could draw, and draw big!

Upon that foundation, the Von Erich blitz continued:

July 13 - David beat Bob Sweetan.

Kevin, Rufus Jones, & Pat O'Connor beat Jerry Brown, the Turk, & Lord Alfred Hayes.

August 10 - Kevin & Pat O' Connor beat Bob Sweetan & Lord Alfred Hayes.

THE PROGRAM

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1979
— 8:30 P.M. —
KIEL AUDITORIUM
14th & Market Sts. St. Louis, Mo.

THE MAIN EVENT
An Australian Tag Team Match

David Von Erich
236, Denton, Texas
and
Kevin Von Erich
Missouri State Champion
235, Denton, Texas
Vs.
Harley Race
World Heavyweight Champion
248, Kansas City, Mo.
and
Dick Murdoch
268, Waxahachie, Texas
Two out of three falls, one hour time limit.
Two minute rest period between falls.

THE SEMI-FINAL
Pat O'Connor
Former World Champion
235, Wellington, N.Z.
Vs.
"King Kong" Brody
284, Santa Fe, N.M.
One fall, 30 minute time limit.

THE ADDED ATTRACTION
Lord Alfred Hayes
240, Winderemere, England
Vs.
Dick "the Bruiser"
250, Reno, Nevada
One fall, 30 minute time limit.

THE THIRD MATCH
Bobo Brazil Vs. **Ed Wiskoski**
283, Benton Harbor, Mich. 262, St. Joseph, Mo.
One fall, 20 minute time limit.

THE SECOND MATCH
"Bulldog" Bob Brown Vs. **Tom Andrews**
241, Winnipeg, Canada 240, Sacramento, Calif.
One fall, 20 minute time limit.

THE OPENING BOUT
An Australian Tag Team Match
Eddie Gilbert
225, Nashville, Tenn.
and
Ronnie Etchison
240, St. Joseph, Mo.
Vs.
The Turk
252, Ankara, Turkey
and
Billy Howard
234, Duluth, Minn.
Two out of three falls, 30 minute time limit.
Two minute rest period between falls.

NEXT ISSUE IN WT&N:

Von Erich's In St. Louis Pt. 3
Interview with Slammers'
Verne Langdon: On Wrestling History & its preservation
Iron Mike Einhorn /1920 RASSLIN
The Jersey Devil /RARE CLIPS
Much, much more...

David and Dick the Bruiser beat Gene Kiniski and Ox Baker

August 26 - David and Kevin teamed with Gene Kiniski for a victory on "Wrestling at the Chase." This match was done partly to get Kiniski over as a face. What better way than to team with the ultra-popular Von Erichs.

September 14 - David beat "Bulldog" Bob Brown.

Kevin, Dick the Bruiser, & Pat O' Connor beat Bob Sweetan, Bobby Duncum, and Lord Alfred Hayes.

At this time Kevin was exhibiting his leg strength by crushing large sacks of wheat with his leg scissors hold. Kevin was also using that leg scissors as a finisher.

Oct. 5 - Kevin & Pat O' Connor beat "Bulldog" Bob Brown & Roger Kirby.

October 19 - Kevin beat Bobby Duncum.

David, Dick the Bruiser, & George Wells beat Lord Alfred Hayes, "Bulldog" Bob Brown, & Ox Baker.

On a match aired October 21 on "Wrestling at the Chase," Kevin and Gene Kiniski went to a double disqualification against "Bulldog" Bob Brown and Missouri State Champion Dick Murdoch. This set up a November 2 confrontation at Kiel Auditorium between Kevin and Murdoch for Dick's Missouri State Championship, a very prestigous title due to the fact that many NWA world champions had held it. In that headlining match, Kevin pinned Murdoch with the iron claw to take the title. Kevin thus became the first Von Erich to hold a major title in St. Louis.

On a segment of "Wrestling at the Chase" aired November 17, as St. Louis expressed jubilation over Kevin's attaining the state crown, Kerry Von Erich made his debut. Kerry immediately won over the fans with his athletic build, and like his two brothers, he knew his way around the ring and delivered exciting wrestling action. With the addition of Kerry, David and Kevin rang down the curtain on 1979:

November 23 - Kevin beat Ox Baker

December 7 - David and Kevin beat Harley Race and Dick Murdoch (David winning both falls)

Tommy Heggie of 501 High St. Dickson, Tenn 37055 is interested in 1960's & 70's wrestling tapes.

Fritz Von Erich, who invented the "Iron Claw," joins his son David to oppose Siegfried Stanke and Jerry Brown on the excellent Kiel Auditorium bill Friday, April 27.

Few matmen have the type of credentials Fritz has earned. An international star, the rugged Fritz can virtually name the city in which he wants top billing.

Offspring David and Kevin are rapidly making splendid reputations. And Fritz loves nothing more than teaming with either or both. Kevin is currently touring Japan.

Brown and Stanke, though, pose serious trouble. This rough combination nailed down impressive victories at Kiel March 9 and April 6. Father and son must be sharp indeed to get past Stanke and Brown.

Fritz Proposes Idea About Missouri Title

If the Missouri State Champion becomes the World Heavyweight Champion, the state throne is declared vacant pending a tournament to find a new titleholder.

At least, that is the current policy. Fritz Von Erich, though, has another idea about what to do if his son Kevin, now the Missouri ruler, defeats Harley Race for the World Championship Feb. 22.

"Instead of a lengthy tournament, the Missouri crown could be awarded to Kevin's brother David," suggested Fritz.

"After all, David is right up in the rankings with Kevin," pointed out Fritz. "In fact, the only reason David has not had a shot at the Missouri title is that it belonged to his brother!

"And David would be eager to give anyone, including Race, a crack at the state honor," Fritz added.

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Wrestling press/media-- Thank you for your plugs for my annual! Unfortunately, due to expense I simply CAN'T provide freebies!

BOOK REVIEWS by Nick Voss

Wild West Characters. A 1991 release which would not lead anyone to believe wrestling material may be found inside, but it does. If readers didn't recognize the Dale Pierce name from various past works and magazine articles, viewers would find this book very easily passed by and miss a good deal of interesting material on past greats, seldom mentioned by the modern audience of Hulkamaniacs or Stingers. Frank Gotch, Fred Beell, and William Muldoon, three pioneers of pro wrestling are dealt with great emphasis, although gunfighters, lawmen, boxers, and significant others overshadow them in the text. It makes for interesting reading and deserves a spot on any library shelf or private bookshelf. While the author does not come right out and say it, he hints and makes it obvious to anyone with any smarts, that the wrestling world was at least half-worked, even back in the 1900's and beyond. Mention of carnival shows and half-shoots are obvious to the keen eye, but most significantly is the focus on the Gotch-Beell bout in which the latter won an upset victory? How? Well, it seems Gotch, the defending champion, delivered a flying tackle, but Beell ducked out of the way, causing Gotch to strike his head on the ringpost, fall backward, and knock himself out. Sound familiar? You bet, Ace! This same spot is still being used, some 80 years later, in the ring today. A colorful book for a multitude of different audiences. $5.95 plus $1.50 postage, available direct from Golden West Publishers, 4113 N. Longview, Phoenix, Az. 85014. It may be found in numerous bookstores in the west, but in other parts of the country, distribution is not that effective and it may be best to order your copy direct. A Wild West Characters II is reportedly in the drawing stage by the author.

Popular Sports. Their Origins & Development.
Written by a Frank Collins, this kid's book was published by Rand McNaly in 1935. If you can find it in some goodwill store or bookstore specializing in rare books, check it out. A cartoon/illustrated piece which looks like pages out of an old Ripley's Believe it or Not column, dealing with dozens of sports, pro wrestling included. The book mentions the aforementioned Frank Gotch and William Muldoon, though not anywhere in near so much detail as the Pierce book, mentions Strangler lewis and notes, curiously "In the time of Abraham Lincoln, wrestlers were highly respected," a sobering indication that even at the time of this book release, long before Gorgeous George, the man many erroneously accuse of dramatizing wrestling and "working", the business was on its way downward, presumedly with the same scoffers and cries of fakery that still abound. It also notes that "Since 1928, heavyweight wrestling had been divided into 2 factions, the east claiming Ed (Strangler) Lewis and the west claiming (Jim) Londos." One can only shrug and realize "Wrestling Then & NOw" was much the same in some respects, long before the arrival of Buddy Rogers, Gorgeous George, and Red Berry.

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Coming in May of 1991 in a limited, signed number of copies (500 only). A series of short stories related to a cursed bullring and town. The bloodiest and most twisted Dale Pierce book yet. A doll predicts death in the ring, all attempts to rid a town of demonic influence, an old curse comes to life, a record transports the listener into the past, a family creates a museum out of dead body parts, and other chilling, even stomach-turning tales, all bound together in one potentially-rare book. $10.00 per copy, reservations taken now.

Order direct from the author:

Dale Pierce
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Phoenix, AZ 85063

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ST. LOUIS WRESTLING CLUB — Saturday, October 9, 1971

"Black Jack" Lanza Vows to Defeat "The Bruiser" in Kiel Prelim Oct. 15

Jerry Brisco Makes Debut Against Cholak On Kiel Slate Oct. 15

Miller Boosts Brother

"Terry Funk, Jerry Brisco . . . why is Sam Muchnick bringing in young punks like these when he hasn't asked my brother to come to St. Louis?" growled "Big Bill" Miller, whose brother Dan is an adept grappler.

Muchnick had a quick response for Bill's angry question. "Dan Miller is a fine wrestler. If he'll contact me and we can agree on terms, I'll be very happy to give Dan a chance to appear in St. Louis. Whatever happens then is up to Dan."

Race Pushed Funk, Jr. To Limit in Oct. 1 Bout

Although his ruthless assault on World Heavyweight Champion Dory Funk, Jr., Oct. 1, eventually met with defeat, Central States king Harley Race demonstrated that he is indeed a contender for Funk to fear. Race pushed Funk to the hilt until Harley missed a flying head butt and was pinned by Funk for the final fall.

Other bouts saw Jack Brisco beat Von Raschke on a disqualification to become the sole survivor and winner of a six-man tag elimination fracas. Dick "the Bruiser" trounced Mike Paidousis. Hans Schmidt topped Greg Valentine. Vivacious Vivian Vachon and Ethel Johnson took two-of-three-falls from Marva Scott and Kay Noble. Steve Bolus whipped Gene Madrid.

MIKE RODGERS'

HAWAII 1967

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10/18/67 HONALULU
RAY STEVENS & PAT PATTERSON BEAT KING CURTIS & DUTCH SCHULTZ DQ, NICK BOCKWINKLE & JIM HADY BEAT THJE ENFORCERS, BILLY WHITEWOLF BEAT FRITZ VON GOERING. ANGELO POFFO BEAT NICK KOZAK, DORY FUNK BEAT KONGOZAN, VICTOR THE BEAR BEAT RIPPER COLLINS.

10/25/67 HONALULU
VICTOR THE BEAR VS TANK MORGAN & DUTCH SCHULTZ, THE ALASKAN & KING CURTIS VS JIM HADY & NICK KOZAK, RIPPER COLLINS VS NICK BOCKWINKLE, BILLY WHITEWOLF VS TANK MORGAN, ANGELO POFFO VS ERIC FROLICH.

11/15/67 HONALULU
JIM HADY BEAT DUTCH SCHULTZ TO DEFEND HAWAIIAN TITLE, JOHN BAREND & NICK BOCWINKLE BEAT KING CURTIS & THE ALASKAN, BILLY WHITEWOLF BEAT KILLER KOWALSKI, KONGOZAN DREW SHOULDERS NEWMAN, ANGELO POFFO DREW LORD BLEARS.

11/22/67 HONALULU
BILLY WHITEWOLF & JIM HADY & JOHNNY BAREND BEAT KINJI SHIBUYA & KILLER KOWALSKI & ANGELO POFFO, THE ALASKAN BEAT FRANK ALLMAN, KING CURTIS DREW NICK BOCKWINKLE, BILLY WHITEWOLF DREW DUTCH SCHULTZ.

11/29/67 HONALULU
JIM HADY & JOHNNY BAREND BEAT DUTCH SCHULTZ & KING CURTIS, KINJI SHIBUYA BEAT BEAUREGARD, RIPPER COLLINS BEAT THE ALASKAN, BILLY WHITEWOLF & NICK BOCKWINKLE BEAT RAY STEVENS & PAT PATTERSON DQ, SAILOR ART THOMAS & BEARCAT WRIGHT DREW ANGELO POFFO & KILLER KOWALSKI.

12/6/67 HONALULU
BILLY WHITEWOLF BEAT KING CURTIS, JIM HADY & JOHNNY BAREND DREW RIPPER COLLINS & DAVID SCHULTZ, ANGELO POFFO BEAT BEAUREGARD, KINJI SHIBUYA BEAT THE ALASKAN, KILLER KOWALSKI BEAT NICK BOCKWINKLE.

12/13/67 HONALULU
JOHNNY BAREND & JIM HADY VS KILLER KOWALSKI & ANGELO POFFO, KING CURTIS & RIPPER COLLINS VS BILLY WHITEWOLF & NICK BOCKWINKLE, DUTCH SCHULTZ VS THE ALASKAN, KINJI SHIBUYA VS FRANK ALLMAN.

12/20/67 HONALULU
JIM HADY WON BATTLE ROYAL, NICK BOCKWINKLE & VICTOR RIVERA DREW RIPPER COLLINS & DUTCH SCHULTZ, JIM HADY BEAT BEAUREGARD, BILLY WHITEWOLF DREW KINJI SHIBUYA, FRED BLASSIE BEAT NICK KOZAK, JOHNNY BAREND BEAT THE ALASKAN.

US CHAMPIONSHIP
JOHNNY BAREND
KING CURTIS 3/1/67
JOHNNY BAREND 11/7/67

HAWAIIAN TITLE
RIPPER COLLINS
JIM HADY 3/15/67

HAWAIIAN TAG TITLES
NEFF MAIVIA & POMPERO FIRPO
HANS MORTIER & JOHNNY BAREND 2/1/67
KING CURTIS & RIPPER COLLINS 5/3/67
JOHNNY BAREND & JIM HADY 7/25/67
JOHNNY BAREND & RIPPER COLLINS 12/27/67
BAREND & HADY SPLIT

1967 WRESTLER OF THE YEAR
KING CURTIS WINS THIS HONOR FOR THE SECOND TIME. HE CAPTURED TREMENDOUS WINS OVER SOME BIG NAMES AND JUST EDGED OUT JIM HADY. CURTIS HELD THE US TITLE FOR OVER 8 MONTHES AND ALSO HELD THE TAG BELTS WITH RIPPER COLLINS FOR 2 MONTHES. SING WINS OVER KARL GOTCH, DON LEO JONATHON, DORY FUNK JR AND BILL WATTS SECURED THE HONOR. HE ALSO BEAT JOHNNY BAREND, BABY BLIMP, NICK KOZAK, AND THE MASKED EXECUTIONER.

1967 TAG TEAM OF THE YEAR
JIM HADY & JOHNNY BAREND EDGED OUT QUITE A FEW TOP TEAMS FOR THE HONOR MOST NOTABLE KING CURTIS & RIPPER COLLINS. HADY & BAREND HELD THE TAG BELTS FOR 5 MONTHES AND BEAT CURTIS & COLLINS, BILLY WHITEWOLF & NICK KOZAK, ENFORCERS, KING CURTIS & DUTCH SCHULTZ, COLLINS & SCHULTZ AND OTHERS. UNFORTUNATLY THIS TEAM BROKE UP AT THE VERY END OF THE YEAR.

LETTERS TO WT&N

Sorry I haven't written sooner, but I must say I really enjoy WT&N. One thing that I'd like to see covered is the WWWF in the 70's/early 80's because that's where I broke into watching wrestling. The first time I ever saw wrestling was in the early 70's when I was about 8 years old. My cousin who lived across the street called me up and said to put on Channel 9 from Steubenville, Ohio which at the time we got up here in Pittsburgh. He wanted me to see "the guy fightin' on TV who looks like Gary Scmayo", who was a bigger kid who lived up the street, and I'll be damned if he didn't have exactly the same face as Andre the Giant! After watching Andre beat 3 men, I was hooked. My cousin, being 4 years older than me (and 4 years SMARTER too) used to bet me on tv matches where he'd get the top stars and I'd get the preliminary stiffs. I lost many a quarter believing that this guy or that guy "almost beat Bruno last week" until I wised up.

My cousin, uncle and I used to go every month to the matches in the mid/late 70's of the WWWF. I can remember shaking Bruno's and Bobo Brazil's hands in the same night, getting my jacket stained with Bruno's sweat, Stan Hansen's pants getting pulled down around his knees during a cage match, and getting Stan Stasiak's bloood on one of my shirts. I also remember almost breaking my leg during a Bruno-Dominic Denucci/Ivan Koloff-Nickolai Volkoff tag match when I was standing on my seat, jumped up, and landed on the floor when I missed the seat when I landed.

Well, getting back to WT&N, I'm especially interested in what guys are saying about Vince McMahon Jr. and Sr. While I know you hate him and the WWF, I must confess that I still watch and attend WWF house shows (please don't hold it against me). I just can't seem to get it out of my system, you know? Please keep up the good work on WT&N and I look forward to receiving the annual. Thank you.

JOHN M. KULKA
MCKEES ROCKS, PA.

Enclosed is $7.00 for the History of the Territories annual. What a great idea! When I first began watching wrestling two decades ago, it was Jim Crockett's Mid-Atlantic area and the Nick Gulas Tennessee promotion that dominated in my part of the country. I look forward to receiving my copy!

TIM WHITEHEAD
JOHNSON CITY, TN.

I was very pleased to see Mike Chapman's piece on Frank Gotch in the Jan. 1992 issue. Very few wrestling fans today realize how important Gotch was to the sport. I have also read Mike's fine biography of Gotch, which I believe all wrestling fans will find both enlightening and entertaining. Unfortunately, this book hasn't seemed to have gotten the wide promotion it surely deserves, so the order form printed next to the article was very helpful. For people who don't know Mike Chapman, he is presently the leading U.S. writer on amateur wrestling. He writes a column in Amateur Wrestling News and authored the Encyclopedia of American Wrestling and many other wrestling books.

It should not surprise pro wrestling fans that such an authority on amateur wrestling takes such an interest in one of the greatest legends in pro wrestling. What many people may not realize is that pro wrestling in Gotch's day was not the work it is now, with bookers giving out finishes, angles, etc., but that it was still a legitimate, competitive sport, akin to boxing. While there certainly were some areas that were staged, the matches of Gotch, Jenkins, Hackenschmidt, Farmer Burns, Fred Beell, and their colleagues were shoot matches that attracted not only mainstream media attention, but also the bane of all true sports- gambling and odds-making.

Towards the end of his career, the staid New York Times had this to say of Gotch:

Not in the athletic world today is there a man with a stronger personality than Frank Gotch. The pity of it is that the wrestling game, fallen on evil days through sharp practices and shady tactics of its opponents, has not known more men of the Gotch type.

It is his moral courage and strength of character that have enabled Frank Gotch to keep his name clear of stain while engaged in a profession that has come to be looked upon with something more than suspicion. Never during his long career on the mat has there been anything of a frame-up in any contest with which Gotch has been connected. And never has he been anything except the gentleman and the fair sportsman whether he is trying to pin an opponent's shoulders to the mat or attempting to push through a new deal in real estate. Frank Gotch is the one bright spot on the darkened horizon of the wrestling game, and he is one champion who has helped to keep the profession of which he is the ablest exponent from slipping entirely down to disgrace.

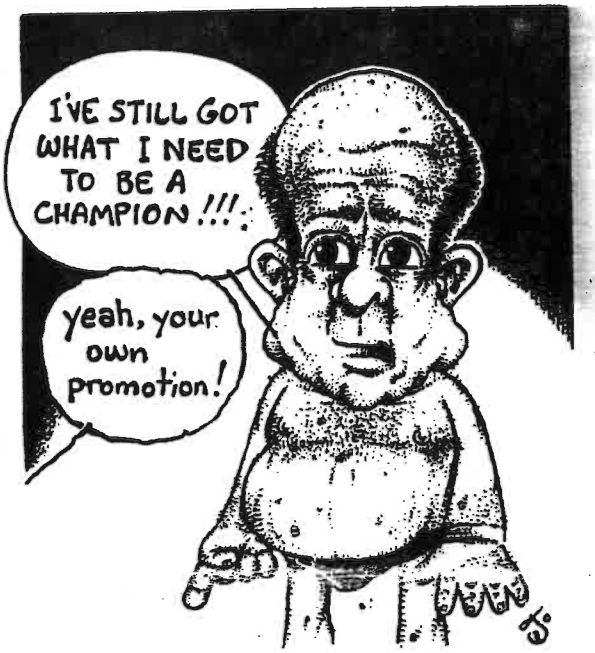
December 3, 1911

From this we see not only the strength of Gotch's reputation, but also the future of what pro wrestling was to come after his departure. Yet the transition from periodic "frame-ups" to a staged spectacle was not as "evil" as the Times stuffed shirts made out. Wrestling in Gotch's day was extremely rough. Held in a ring, the rules allowed many holds, such as Gotch's famed toe-hold, that could break bones and seriously injure a wrestler. The fierceness of the sport limited the amount of matches a wrestler could have, even without injuries. From 1899 to 1915 Gotch had only 160 sanctioned matches- half of what many wrestlers have had in one year in good times. Turning it into a work gave fans and wrestlers the best of both worlds- many high intensity, exciting spectacular matches while protecting the wrestlers. Good theater and safety were the trade-offs for giving up pure sport.

While pro wrestling has radically changed since Gotch's day, he still is one of our legends that helped make it a big-time sport in the U.S. and set a pattern for subsequent generations of wrestlers. We should value this heritage and do more to reclaim and preserve it.

EDDIE GOLDMAN
NYC

DID YOU KNOW?
THE WWF BELT CAUSES HAIR LOSS? CHECK IT OUT!
BRUNO SAMMARTINO
WORE SEVERAL "PIECES" DURING HIS SECOND WWWF TITLE REIGN. THE WORST ONE MADE HIM LOOK LIKE LITTLE LORD FAUNTLEROY...
DOGGONE THIS WIG!
OK, BRU-THUH!
THE GUY WHO CREATED THE WHOLE BANDANA-COVERING-THE-THINNING-PEROXIDE-HAIR LOOK...
SUPERSTAR BILLY GRAHAM!
"HOWDY DOODY" BOB BACKLUND SHAVED HIS HEAD WHILE WWWF CHAMPION (JUST TO FIT IN)...
AS HULK HOGAN'S FAME GREW, HIS HAIRLINE RECEDED... IT IS NOW SOMEWHERE AROUND HIS NECK...
RANDY "MACHO MAN" SAVAGE
MR. SPLIT-ENDS HIMSELF... STARTED GOING WITH THE SUPERSTAR GRAHAM-STYLE BANDANA AS THE ENDS, THEN THE MIDDLE AND THEN THE ROOTS STARTED SPLITTING...



Verne deludes himself...

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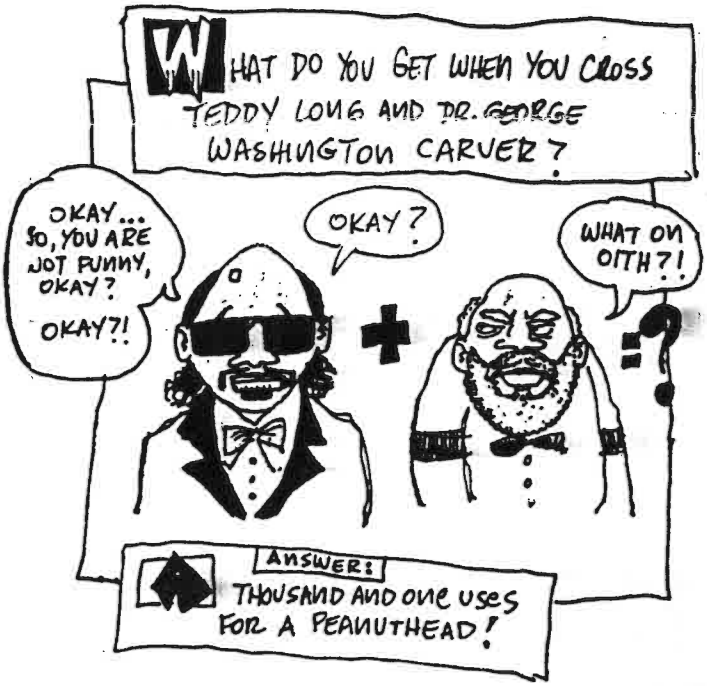
POTSHOTS THEN AND NOW

by Bill Kunkel


WHAT DO YOU GET WHEN YOU CROSS TEDDY LONG AND DR. GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER?
OKAY... SO, YOU ARE NOT FUNNY, OKAY?
OKAY?!
OKAY?
WHAT OH OITH?!
ANSWER:
THOUSAND AND ONE USES FOR A PEANUTHEAD!